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RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0387

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000836

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA

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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [SW](#)
SUBJECT: STOCKHOLM: REVIEW FOR SUSPENSION OF TITLE III OF
THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: STATE 126578

Classified By: Pol Counselor Marc Koehler, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶1.](#) (U) The information in this message is keyed to questions posed in reftel.

[¶2.](#) (C) Has Sweden worked to promote the advancement of democracy and human rights in Cuba?

-- Since 1996, Sweden's Cuba policy has been to support democratic development and respect for human rights in Cuba through the EU's "constructive engagement" policy. Sweden uses such engagement to raise human rights concerns with Havana, including regularly citing Cuba in Sweden's annual human rights report. In 2006 (the most recent data available), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) allocated nearly one million USD to encourage democratic reforms in Cuba, including projects focusing on human rights training, economic modernization, and exchanges between Cuban and Swedish institutions.

[¶3.](#) (C) Has Sweden made public statements or undertaken other governmental actions, such as resolutions in Parliament condemning human rights abuses in Cuba; or other actions in support of civil society in Cuba through Sweden's diplomatic mission or other fora?

-- Swedish FM Bildt publicly criticizes Cuba on a regular basis. After Fidel Castro's resignation, FM Bildt pointed out on his daily blog that, "Today Cuba is the only country in the Western hemisphere which lacks a popularly elected government. Instead it is weighed down by an obsolete and fossilized Communist regime." In June 2008, a Member of the European Parliament questioned the EU's increased cooperation with Cuba and FM Bildt responded that he could not see any changes with regards to democratization in Cuba, but that he was open to dialogue in order to influence reform. On December 10, 2008, FM Bildt mentioned Cuba in his speech at the 60th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, stating, "A couple of decades ago Mao's culture revolution and Castro's Cuba was the ideal for many young people in the West. Today the demand for one party states and dictatorships is close to none in the free world. And so it should be, human rights are universal and eternal."

[¶4.](#) (C) Have there been any high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and Sweden in the past six months?

There have been no high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and Sweden for over a decade. The last such visit was in 1999, when then Cuban Minister for Finance and Planning, Jose Luis Rodriguez Garcia, traveled to Sweden.

[¶5.](#) (C) Did Sweden offer or deliver humanitarian or other assistance to the Cuban people in the wake of the major damage caused by Hurricane Gustav (August 30) or Ike

(September 8)?

-- In September 2008, SIDA approved the Swedish Red Cross's expenditure of approximately 460,000 USD in support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' hurricane relief appeal. In October 2008, SIDA approved the aid agency Diakonia's expenditure of approximately 130,000 USD to support 1,000 families affected by Hurricane Gustav and Ike in the provinces Pinar del Rio, Las Tunas, Holguin, and Matanzas in Cuba. The implementing organizations included Consejo de Iglesias de Cuba (CIC), Centro Memorial Martin Luther King (CMMLK), and Centro Cristiano de Reflexion y Dialogo (CCRD).

16. (C) What is the nature of investments (and names, if known) that Swedish businesses have in Cuba? What Swedish businesses participated in the Havana Trade Fair (November 3)?

-- A few Swedish companies have operations in Cuba, including Elof Hansson (forestry and consumer products), Atlas Copco (nickel and steel), Alfa Laval (oil, sugar, and food-products), Volvo Construction Equipment (trucks and other machinery), Ericsson (fixed telephone, GSM-networks, cell phones), and Bycosin (metallic powder for oil industry and the energy sector). In 2007, Swedish exports to Cuba doubled to approximately 38 million USD, while imports decreased by 69 percent to approximately 800,000 USD. Approximately 20 Swedes live in Cuba, but between three and five thousand Swedish tourists visit Cuba each year.

-- Post is not aware of any recent investments or Swedish business participation in the Havana Trade Fair. On November

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24-26, 2008, a private delegation with representatives from Swedish companies Atlas Copco, Ronautica, Seaflex, Swedish Mining, Tunneling Group and EKN Havana visited Cuba to meet with business counterparts.

17. (C) Are there any bilateral trade agreements or other cooperative agreements between Sweden and Cuba?

-- Post is not aware of any bilateral trade or cooperative agreements between Sweden and Cuba.

18. (C) Are there any exchange programs between Sweden and Cuba, including but not limited to: scholarships for Swedish nationals to study in Cuba; Cuban-paid medical travel for Swedes; and other Cuban doctors working in Sweden?

-- Post is not aware of any Cuba-specific exchange programs. The Swedish Migration Board reported only eight Cubans studying independently in Sweden in 2007.
SILVERMAN